THE THIRD DAY.

2nd March 1921.

The Assembly met at 11-30 A. M. on Wednesday, the 2nd March 1921.

13. The urgent need for the restoration of poramboke lanes, paths, &c. to their original measurements.

Mr. Paul Daniel M. A., L. T., (Member, Nominated) said that, from personal observation in the taluks of Agastiswaram, Tovala and Eraniel, he could state that several lanes which served useful purposes in the past had gradually disappeared or become narrow, and that Government were not bestowing sufficient attention in regard to their conservation matter. The lanes were the precursors of the modern public roads and had been set apart for very definite purposes. Villages and hamlets were intersected by these pathways. The public roads did not appreciably benefit the interior villages in the matter of communications, and the construction of new roads was not generally undertaken by Government. The need for maintaining the old lanes and pathways intact was therefore obvious. In many instances, the last Settlement had unsettled the original measurements of the pathways. Encroachments on pathways were many and frequent, but their detection and the restoration of the paths to their old condition were rare. Petitions regarding encroachments on a long bund between two paddy fields in the Nindakara pakuthi ended in the conviction of a poor man who had encroached upon one foot at the widest point of the path, but the path has not yet been restored. The Revenue department was not paying sufficient attention to the detection of encroachments. The necessity for conserving all the old pathways, &c. became greater, as it was proposed to bring all the available lands under the Kodayar Project. The transport of manure to the fields and of the harvested crop to the threshing floors became otherwise impossible. One of the most potent obstacles to the conversion of large portions of the commanded area was the absence of such facilities. As the result of a representation on the subject, Government had promised to render one bank of all the channels fit for wheeled traffic; some irrigation preliminary work was done and great expectations were raised. But ultimately nothing came out of it. Masonry structures had on the contrary been erected on the banks of channels to prevent cart traffic. The Special Officer appointed to speed up conversions in the commanded area should be asked to inspect, with the aid of the pakuthi officers, all the poramboke lanes useful to the ryots, and to remove the encroachments thereon. The fines inflicted on the trespassers and the money realisable by the sale of unnecessary pathways would bring in revenue to Government. The advantages to the cultivator would also be immense. The same method should be adopted in regard to encroachments on lanes serving as pathways to villages. To ensure that work under this head is being satisfactorily done, Government should call for regular monthly returns from the officer or officers to whom the work is entrusted.

Dewan's reply.—I am glad that Mr. Daniel has brought forward this subject of poramboke lanes and paths as it illustrates the need for administrative Village Panchayats with executive powers. The tendency to encroach on porambokes is universal and is not confined to this country alone. Periodical surveys and re-surveys are conducted and land records supervision is exercised for the purpose of repressing these encroachments. The House will be glad to hear that one of the chief objects with which the new post of Assistant Tahsildar has been created is the repression of such encroachments. It is the prime duty of the Assistant Tahsildar to inspect porambokes and to repress encroachments. His opinions will be much more authoritative and much more reliable than those of the pakuthy officers, and on the

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strength of his reports definite action can be taken. If with the future dministrative Village Panchayat he would only co-operate, we may safely say that we have come to a stage when something definite will be done to tackle this problem successfully. I may inform you also that it has been made one of the duties of the Special Officer who has been appointed to look into the progress that is being made in the conversion of lands under the Kodayar Project, to see that lands acquired for such purposes the lanes such as roads, threshing floors, village sites, etc., are reserved before lands are so converted. I found in the course of my tour in the southern taluks that there was a serious omission on the part of the officers who were responsible for the Kodayar Project. They had made no provision for habitations for an increasing population and for other communal needs. The Special Officer has been specially directed to reserve lands required for communal purposes when submitting proposals for conversion. I shall be very glad to instruct this Special Officer to also detect encroachments on porambokes, as far as it is possible for him to do so in the course of his special duty, and bring the cases detected by him to the notice of the Tahsildar and his Assistant.

14. The need for the introduction of certain new provisions regarding *Thiruppu-varom*.

Mr. Narayanar Janardhanar (Member, Jenmi, Trivandrum Division) said that, with reference to his representation at the seventh session of the Assembly, the Government in their order No. 13027/L. R. & F., dated the 6th December 1912, recognised the right of all thiruppu-holders to collect their *varom* at the pre-settlement rates and also directed that, in cases where the Settlement department had made a reduction, the *varom* at the pre-settlement rate should be made good by the Government to the thiruppu-holder until the next general Revenue Settlement in the State. But in practice thiruppu-holders had been meeting with great difficulties in their attempts to recover the full thiruppu due to them. Applicants for thiruppu were called upon by Government to furnish detailed information in regard to the lands on which the *varom* was charged, the *varom* due as per the pre-settlement accounts, the *varom* provided in the Settlement pattahs, the *varom* reduced at the Settlement and the *varom* applied for. In many cases, they had no accounts and even if they had accounts, they found it difficult to correctly allocate the thiruppu in reference to the survey numbers of lands subject to the payment. Ozhugus were often declared to be not available at the taluk cutcherries. Though the applicant surmounted all these difficulties and succeeded in furnishing the information, he could not be sure that, in recompense for all his trouble and expense, Government would eventually order payment of the whole back arrears with interest in a lump. In the case of a Jenmi who applied for payment of thiruppu on certain lands in the Kotanallur, Tiruvattar and Triparappu pakuthies in the Kalkulam taluk, the Government eventually denied his claim to the arrears of thiruppu reduced at the settlement and interest thereon and ordered that treasury payments might thereafter be made to the Jenmi in lieu of the *varom* reduced at the settlement. The Member himself had claimed thiruppu in respect of certain lands in the Nedumangad taluk. Though over two years had elapsed since he furnished information regarding the details of his claim, no orders had yet been passed for the payment of the amount due. The thiruppu-holders had of course the liberty to resort to the civil courts to recover twelve years, arrears with interest and costs. But that step involved loss to the Government and the Jenmi alike. The Government were in possession of the necessary accounts. Soon after the issue of the G. O. of the 6th December 1912, referred to above, the Government had called for and obtained talukwar lists of lands subject to thiruppuvarom, containing detailed information regarding the *varoms* due as per the Settlement and pre-settlement accounts. In these circumstances, the Member requested that Government might dispense with the need for the claims being substantiated by the applicants, issue definite orders to the taluk authorities directing them to furnish the Jenmis with information regarding the survey numbers &c., of lands on which the thiruppu was reduced at the settlement and direct payment of such thiruppu from the taluk with effect from the next year.

Dewan's reply.—The matter is being expedited as far as possible.

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